

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A shirred tubular food casing comprising pleats, said food casing based on a blend of at least one polyamide and/or (co)polyamide and at least one hydrophilic component, wherein the casing is biaxially stretch-oriented and is impregnated on the inside and/or outside with at least one component which allows the pleats of the casing to adhere to one another.

2. (Previously Presented) The shirred food casing as claimed in claim 1, wherein the (co)polyamide is an aliphatic (co)polyamide.

3. (Previously Presented) The shirred food casing as claimed in claim 1, wherein the hydrophilic component is a natural and/or synthetic polymer which can take up at least 20% by weight of its own weight of water.

4. (Original) The shirred food casing as claimed in claim 3, wherein the natural polymer is a polysaccharide.

5. (Previously Presented) The shirred food casing as claimed in claim 1, wherein the hydrophilic component is a water-soluble synthetic polymer.

6. (Previously Presented) The shirred food casing as claimed in claim 5, wherein the water-soluble synthetic polymer is a polyvinyl alcohol, a vinylpyrrolidone (co)polymer, a

polyalkylene glycol, a (co)polymer containing units of N-vinylalkylamides, or a (co)polymer containing units of (meth)acrylic acid or (meth)acrylamide.

7. (Previously Presented) The shirred food casing as claimed in claim 1, wherein the hydrophilic component is a polyether amide, polyester amide, polyether ester amide or polyamido urethane.

8. (Previously Presented) The shirred food casing as claimed in claim 1, wherein the component used for the impregnation is a water-soluble cellulose ether and/or a polyalkylene glycol.

9. (Previously Presented) The shirred food casing as claimed in claim 1, wherein it is coated on the inside and/or outside with about 2 to 500 mg/m² of a component having adhesion properties.

10. (Previously Presented) The shirred food casing as claimed in claim 1, wherein the casing is stretched in an area stretching ratio of 6 to 18.

11. (Previously Presented) The shirred food casing as claimed in claim 1, wherein the casing is heat set.

12. (Previously Presented) The shirred food casing as claimed in claim 1, wherein the casing is single layered.

13. (Previously Presented) The shirred food casing as claimed in claim 1, wherein the wall thickness of the casing is 12 to 60 μ m.

14. (Previously Presented) The shirred food casing as claimed in claim 1, wherein the casing can take up 10 to 50 % by weight of water, based on its dry weight.

15. (Previously Presented) The shirred food casing as claimed in claim 1, wherein the shirring ratio is 80 : 1 to 500 : 1.

16. (Previously Presented) Cooked-meat sausages, scalded-emulsion sausages, and small sausages comprising the shirred food casing as claimed in claim 1.